



South Central District Health

Keeping your family and community healthy

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VIRAL HEMORRHAGIC FEVER (VHF) AS A BIOTERRORISM EVENT

What are viral hemorrhagic fevers?

The viruses that cause viral hemorrhagic fevers (VHF) are common in Africa and in South America but are very rare in the United States.

What are the actual names of hemorrhagic fevers?

Argentine and Bolivian Hemorrhagic Fever, Lassa Fever, Rift Valley Fever, Crimean-Congo Fever, Marburg and Ebola Hemorrhagic Fever, and Yellow Fever are all viral hemorrhagic fevers.

Can VHF's be spread from person-to-person?

VHF's are commonly spread from person-to-person by contact with infected blood and other infected body fluids such as urine, feces, vomit, and droplets coughed into the air by the infected person.

How soon will symptoms develop (incubation period)?

Normally the symptoms start 5 days or longer after exposure to the virus. Not all persons exposed to the virus will develop symptoms.

What are the symptoms of infection?

The symptoms of VHF's generally include high fever, sore muscles, and extreme weakness. The eyes may become red and the skin may appear to be red (flushed). In the advanced stages of the infection, there may be bleeding from the nose, mouth, bowel, or bladder.

How is the infection treated?

Supportive care may be given but there is no medication available to treat VHF infections.

Where can I get more information about VHF?

For more information, contact South Central District Health at 737-5900.